

turn the TV on. I will guarantee you that I will find a Presidential candidate bullying another candidate just as though it was a school ground.

I know that the children are watching. I know that all that Operation Respect is trying to do and all of the other programs around this Nation that are trying to teach our children to respect each other, to not engage in bullying—I know that their work will be erased from the blackboard by tonight's television.

After all, it is Super Tuesday. And leading up to Super Tuesday, you and I know what we have heard.

Is our Nation better for it? I don't think so. Because I know that the children are watching, and I know somehow an awful message is going out across this Nation that it is okay to demean another person, it is okay to pick on somebody because of their makeup, because of the nature of their face, because they happen to be a woman.

I fear the result of all of this. I don't fear the policies. The policies come and go. We debate here on the floor more military, less military; more education, less education; the environment is good, climate change is real, climate change is not. That is legitimate. That is the way America ought to be.

But to call a woman a bimbo or to say you peed your pants, what in the world is this all about? It is about our children. It is about our future and about telling us what it is okay to do.

Well, it is not okay because the children are listening. Thank God we have organizations—Operation Respect and others—that are somehow trying to push back. They are not going to stop every violent act. At least some kid isn't going to pick up a gun and walk into the school and start blasting away because he has been bullied.

I yield back the balance of my time.

NATIONAL DEBT AND SPENDING

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WESTERMAN. I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous materials on the subject of this Special Order.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Arkansas?

There was no objection.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I was trained as an engineer. In my engineering training, we were taught that, before you can solve a problem, you have to identify and define the problem. If you solve the wrong problem, you accomplish very little.

I serve on the Budget Committee. On the Budget Committee, we take an in-

depth look at all of government. As we examine the programs and as we examine revenues and expenditures of the Federal Government, we see many issues that are of great concern to the future of our country. We see threats to our safety and our security. We see overreach and hassles created by the very government that is here to serve.

Mr. Speaker, there is a gargantuan issue facing our country that threatens all our futures. Our gross national debt, fueled by out-of-control spending, continues to grow and is past \$19 trillion, which exceeds our gross domestic product.

Today, while much of the country focuses on primary elections, several of my colleagues from the Budget Committee, including Chairman PRICE, wish to have an open and honest conversation about this issue of debt and spending that you are probably not going to hear much about anywhere else.

We not only hope to bring attention to this issue by defining the problem. We will propose real solutions to restore fiscal order so that Americans can thrive and Americans—not the government or any one person, but Americans—can make America all that she can be.

If we delve into the major fiscal issues facing our country, it becomes obvious that we have an enormous spending problem. I have a chart here.

This chart shows us where we have been, where we were in 1965. It shows where we are today with the numbers through 2015. It also predicts where we will be in the future in 2026.

The spending represented by the red on these pie charts is what is called mandatory spending. If you want to think of it this way, this spending is on cruise control. This spending is on programs that were put in place by previous Congresses. Really, if we didn't even meet anymore, this spending in the red will continue to go on.

The spending in the blue is the discretionary spending. That is the money that is spent by appropriations that are done in Congress every year.

The 12 appropriation bills that we hope to get back to regular order this year and pass each of those 12 bills out of the House and out of the Senate and put them on the President's desk relate to the spending that is highlighted in blue on these pie charts.

□ 1515

The omnibus bill from last year, that affected what is in the blue. It didn't affect what is in the red.

As you look at these charts, you can see that in 50 years we have had a little bit of a flip-flop. In 1965, we were right at two-thirds of our spending was discretionary, which was controlled by the appropriations process, and right around one-third of our spending was mandatory.

But over that 50-year period, we have seen tremendous growth in spending. We have seen that now over two-thirds

of our spending is mandatory and less than one-third of our spending is discretionary. So, when Congress meets and we debate these appropriations bills, we are only debating about one-third of the spending that takes place by the Federal Government.

The real story is what is projected to happen in 2026, just 10 years from now. Over 50 years, we saw \$17.8 trillion of increased spending in our gross debt. That is \$356 billion a year. But in just 10 short years from today, the Congressional Budget Office projects that our gross debt will be \$29.3 trillion. That will be a growth of over \$11.2 trillion in a 10-year period. That is over \$1 trillion per year that we will see in spending growth between now and 2026 if we stay on the path that we are currently on.

Mr. Speaker, I hope to explain today why we can't stay on this path. There are a lot of issues to look at. My colleagues on the Committee on the Budget will look at the path that we are on, and they will look at different areas of this spending. We will provide solutions to how to avoid the future financial crisis that is only getting worse. We are already in a financial crisis.

When we look at what contributes to our national debt, to our gross debt, \$645 billion this year will go to debt all because of mandatory spending. Our national debt, our gross debt, will increase \$1.1 trillion. It is at about \$19.3 trillion this fiscal year. Only part of that can be controlled through discretionary spending. We have to start addressing the issues with mandatory spending if we truly want to address the fiscal condition of our country.

This next slide breaks it down in a little bit more detail. Remember, red is mandatory spending and blue is discretionary spending. We see that under the discretionary spending, the part that we debate so vigorously in this Chamber, the part that makes all the headlines, most of that, or about half of that, is in defense, and then the rest of it is nondefense discretionary spending.

There are five areas—just five areas—that over two-thirds of everything spent in this country go to. As we saw on the previous chart, by 2026 those five areas will make up over three-fourths, will make up 78 percent of every dollar spent by the Federal Government. Those five areas are: Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, interest on the debt, and kind of a lump category of other mandatory spending.

Right now Social Security is the largest expenditure of the Federal Government at \$882 billion per year. If we look at Social Security and Medicare, these are programs that working Americans have invested in that are very important but are headed to insolvency. We have to fix them to preserve them for all of us who have contributed to them.

The people who project the numbers show that by 2030, on the course we are on, Medicare will be insolvent. By 2034, Social Security will be insolvent. Mr.

Speaker, the young people in our country should be alarmed at this. By 2034 and 2030, these programs that we have all contributed to are projected to be insolvent if we don't change course.

If we look at Medicaid, it grew by double-digit percentage points last year, a lot of that because of the Affordable Care Act. If we look at other mandatory spending, these are our social welfare programs. These were programs that were put in place with good intentions but are getting poor results.

Finally, the one that probably should concern us all the most is our interest on the debt. The Congressional Budget Office tells us that by 2025, if we don't change course, interest on the debt will be a larger expenditure than Social Security.

As our debt continues to balloon and grow, the interest that we must pay on that debt will also balloon and grow, and that is why mandatory spending will become such a large part of all the spending and really make our discretionary spending somewhat minuscule compared to the gargantuan size of mandatory spending.

I want to talk about just a couple of these areas. Some of my colleagues will talk about other areas as we move forward. If we look at some of our social welfare programs and our Medicaid program, again, these programs were put in place for people who were truly in need. They were put in place for a hand up instead of a handout, but oftentimes they have become just the opposite of that. Some of these programs, instead of helping people out of poverty, they trap people in poverty.

Now, Medicaid is a unique issue because it was put in place for aged people, for disabled people, for blind people, people that we would all agree we need to help out and lend a helping hand, but now there are a lot of able-bodied, working-age adults—these are people 18–65 years old who are not disabled—who are receiving Medicaid benefits. We are seeing a lot of increase in cost there.

We are seeing a lot of increase in cost in social welfare programs, such as SNAP. One area where we can address our budget, where we can address this looming fiscal crisis, is in our social welfare programs. Let's look at what has happened just in the SNAP program.

Since 2000, increased enrollment in SNAP programs has grown 171 percent. To say that another way, for every new job added since 2000—and that is 4.3 million of them—30.4 million people have been added to food stamps. That is seven people being added to the Food Stamp program for every new job that has been created in this country since 2000.

Again, instead of lifting people out of poverty, many of our welfare programs are actually trapping people in poverty. If we look at some of the numbers on SNAP, 57 percent of able-bodied adult households have no earned income. These are people receiving the

food stamp benefits. What is even maybe more alarming is 75 percent of the people receiving SNAP benefits, 75 percent of childless adult households have no earned income. That is 17.3 million people. That is a 252 percent increase since 2000 in this one demographic of childless adult households who have zero income who are receiving SNAP benefits. Only 50 percent of parent households have earned income.

So what happens? What happens if we change the scenario? What happens when you move people from welfare to work?

Well, Kansas tried a program. They tried a program to restore work requirements for able-bodied, childless adults in 2013, and they saw fantastic results from that. They saw a 50 percent immediate decline in enrollment when they enacted work requirements for able-bodied, working-age adults on this program. They saw a 68 percent long-term decline in enrollment, and they saw a 168 percent increase in work participation rates among the enrollees. They saw a 133 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees. They saw a 55 percent increase in average income of able-bodied, childless adult enrollees.

Mr. Speaker, a number that we can't ever forget is that only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty. If we want to pull people out of poverty, we need to create an environment where people can work, where they can pull themselves out of poverty.

We have also found that in these social welfare programs like the SNAP program and like Medicaid, where you have got able-bodied, working-age adults on those programs, that the populations overlap. So if you are able to get people back into the workforce and help the SNAP program, you are also going to cut costs out of the Medicaid program. You get a double bang for your buck when you get people back in the workforce. We need to train people. We need to assist people to get back to work. That is what these programs were originally put in place for. We have got to get back to that.

It has been said many times before, but I think it is worth reminding, that the best social program is still a job. Again, only 2.9 percent of full-time workers live in poverty in this country. If we implement work requirements for programs like SNAP, for people who are receiving Medicaid benefits, it will be on those who are able-bodied, working-age adults. We are not going to put this requirement on disabled people. We are not going to put this requirement on elderly people in nursing homes who are dependent on Medicaid. We are not going to put it on children or blind people. This is for able-bodied, working-age adults. We could save billions of dollars in the Medicaid program by doing this.

We can start to address these fiscal issues with one solution of requiring work for people who are receiving benefits that were put in place to help

them get back to work. It worked in Kansas. It has worked in Maine. It has worked in other States. It can work all across our country.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. BRAT), a very capable and well-meaning and well-serving individual.

Mr. BRAT. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN) for yielding to me and for setting up this special session.

It is the most important economic issue of our times. I have taught economics for 20 years or so, and I went to seminary before that. I ran on bringing economics and ethics to Congress, and that was usually kind of a joke in the stump speech, but most people catch it. It matters, linking economics and ethics together. There is no better issue from which to view this challenge as the issue before us today dealing with the monumental increase in mandatory spending.

Congress has been monumentally irresponsible. Promises were made that can't be kept. Politicians sold out the future in favor of immediate gratification, and that future is now.

We see headlines every day in the newspapers about promising more and making promises and not keeping them, but today the evidence is overwhelming. The major promise that has been made that has not been kept is balancing our budget. We promise program after program after program that we cannot pay for, and we have not kept our word. As we will show, the folks who will pay for this are the only folks who don't have a lobbyist in this city, and that is our kids and the next generation.

The U.S. Government has \$19 trillion right now in total public debt outstanding. Debt per citizen currently stands at \$60,000. That is separate from the chart here. We will get to that in a minute.

The gap between Federal revenue and Federal spending over the next 75 years is about \$118 trillion, according to Harvard economics professor Jeffrey Miron. That number, \$118 trillion, is roughly \$368,000 per person in America today—\$400,000, if you round up, per person in America today.

□ 1530

The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. Today is Super Tuesday, and many people from across the Nation are going to the polls. They are, rightly, upset with the fiscal mismanagement in this city over the last couple of decades.

What are they upset about? Here are a few numbers. The deficit is increasing as far as the eye can see. It was \$439 billion in 2015, and it is up—by a \$105 billion increase—to \$544 billion in 2016. That is just the deficit. That is the amount we add to the debt each and every year.

By 2022, CBO, who are the folks who forecast the economic figures for the country—the deficit, the amount we

add to the debt in 1 year, will be \$1 trillion. By 2026, it will be \$1.3 trillion.

In total, by 2026—not that far off—10 years away and high school graduates this year will be 28 years old—the debt will reach nearly \$30 trillion.

That is what we are handing to the next generation. We are having the pizza party and we are going to give the next generation the tab.

More important than the debt—or at least a bigger economic number—autopilot spending is exploding. This is complex. Not many folks know about this issue. Many terms are linked: autopilot spending, entitlement spending, mandatory spending.

Sometimes these terms can be used interchangeably. Sometimes they can. You have got to get down in the weeds. And we will do that today.

But, in general, autopilot spending is, as the gentleman before me just referred, net interest payments, Social Security payments, Federal health programs, Medicare, Medicaid, Obama-Care, Federal civilian military pensions, and welfare programs.

In 1966, these made up 33 percent of Federal spending and 5.6 percent of GDP, the economy. In 2027, these programs will make up 78 percent of Federal spending and 18 percent of GDP, as Congressman WESTERMAN's graph showed. That is assuming that we will be able to borrow in the future.

Another way to look at autopilot spending, on the graph right here, it shows that, in 1966, autopilot spending made up 33.9 percent of Federal revenue. But, by 2027, it will eat up 100 percent of Federal revenue.

So you see the Pac-Man here is getting hungrier by the minute. The autopilot spending is 34 percent in 1966, 68 percent in 2006. Autopilots will consume all Federal revenues in 2027. Again, it is not that far out.

Again, you can go to CBO—the Congressional Budget Office—and this is one of the primary graphs you will see in the first few pages at the Congressional Budget Office.

So, in restatement, in just 11 years—2027—1 year beyond the 10-year budget window—autopilot programs will consume all Federal revenue incoming.

If you are paying attention, what does that mean? That means there will be zero revenue left for law enforcement, medical research, national defense, education, transportation, or even intelligence. The government will have to borrow 100 percent to finance itself, starting in 2027. More and more autopilot spending will be debt that is financed as well.

Is this sustainable? Our friends on the other side are always talking about environmental sustainability. That is a great thing. But what about financial sustainability? What about the sustainability of our Nation? What about the sustainability of Western civilization?

For an answer to that, you may look at the cradle of Western civilization. You can look to Greece. How is Greece

doing when it comes to fiscal responsibilities? What happens to your country when your debt load becomes too heavy? Significant problems emerge and it is very hard to return to a normal, functioning economy.

This is absolutely crucial to the sustainability of American civilization. It is critical that we address this problem for our children's sake. We cannot do this without reforming Federal programs and boosting growth by creating opportunities for people to support themselves.

We need to restore civil society. After all, we are not just physically bankrupt. The government also has a moral, ethical, and spiritual deficit.

Why is that? How can you see the ethical deficit? Many government policies weaken families, as Congressman WESTERMAN just showed you on a graph. We weaken communities, churches, and other faith organizations, clubs, associations, and even businesses. Small startups are not starting up. This is a tragedy.

The only hope for the young kids is to enter business. There is no other way to make money. And we are capping their futures. These critical institutions just don't provide resources and help our communities. They also foster responsibility, mutual accountability, fellowship, and a sense of purpose in our society.

How do you see the ethical deficit in other ways? It is pretty easy to see. The two major mandatory spending programs, Medicare and Social Security, will both be insolvent in 2034. That is about 18 years out. So our 18-year-olds will be 36 years old.

The major programs that seniors rely on today will be insolvent in 2024, and by the time our kids retire, nothing is certain. That is a deficit in ethics.

It is interesting that President Johnson's war on poverty hasn't really eliminated poverty, at least as the government measures it. It is striking that the massive increase in government spending tracks more closely with family breakdown and other concerning trends.

Before the war on poverty—and this is fairly well known—began in the 1960s, self-sufficiency was going up, up, up. The percentage of those in poverty was going down, down, down, down, down.

After the war on poverty begins and all the Federal programs go, that line flattens out and our progress on self-sufficiency comes to an end.

We need to expand opportunities for productive work and fix welfare so earning income always makes people better off.

We now spend half a trillion dollars on welfare programs. And what do we get? We get a flat line with no measurable progress toward self-sufficiency where people can be proud of their work product and the incomes they bring home and the progress of their kids.

Congress is managing too many programs. States need the flexibility so

that they can take on these responsibilities. That is the way our Founders intended things to be set up.

All of human history was ruled from the top down until about 1800. All of human history was also marked by subsistence living. For all of human history, the average person made \$500 per year to live on.

We need to break away from this top-down approach before it is too late. The free market system has lifted us up from \$500 a year closer to \$50,000 per person per year.

More recently, the Chinese and the Indians have moved their way out of top-down government toward free markets. Chinese incomes in the past 20 years have gone from \$1,000 a year to \$9,000 a year.

If you add up the Chinese population and the Indian population, we have 2.5 billion people on this planet that have seen the most massive increase in human welfare imaginable. That came about because they got rid of top-down, central government planning and they moved toward the free market system.

The free market system is not perfect because human beings are not perfect, but there is no debate in the economic textbooks about all of human history versus the move toward human freedom. We all know that human freedom is a great future and something we need to aim for.

Even more important in politics these days is to ask yourself this question: Does this city, Washington, D.C., serve the powerful or does Washington, D.C., truly serve the poor?

Look at the towers going up. Look at the consulting class. Look at the special interests. Look at the millions and millions of dollars that pour into this city. Does this city serve the powerful or the poor?

Tonight, in elections across the Nation, I think you are going to see a resounding answer to some of these questions.

Let's move government back to the people so that we can solve our significant debt problems, our mandatory spending problems, and give our kids hope for their own futures.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Virginia for his thoughtful input, his training, and his expertise. This is the kind of expertise that we need to rely on here in this body.

Next, as Congressman BRAT talked about the laboratories of democracy being the States, I am pleased to yield to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER), who spent a career working with States all across this country and may possibly have a better understanding of more State policies in more regions of the country than anybody else, certainly, that I know.

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague from Arkansas for putting together this Special Order and for those excessively kind compliments.

The budget should present a vision to the American people and should reflect

how the American people approach their own finances. As of late, we simply have not governed according to the standards that the average American governs by.

While we have reduced deficit spending over the last few years, the fact is that we continue to spend more than we take in, adding billions more to our burgeoning debt.

This budget provides us with an opportunity not to repeat the mistakes of the past. Democrats and Republicans can find common ground to get our fiscal house in order.

I want to point out three common-sense solutions to the financial crisis that we face.

First, we can reform the Medicare payment system. Medicare currently uses more than a dozen different payment systems to set payment rates for medical items and services that the program covers for beneficiaries.

The location where someone receives a service determines which payment system applies. Republicans and the President believes this should be corrected. According to the President's own budget, a site-neutral system would save \$10 billion over 10 years.

Second, the General Accountability Office has identified \$125 billion in improper payments made in 2014. This is where the government sends a check to someone not entitled to it.

The GAO attributes about 65 percent of this to just three programs: Health and Human Services' Medicare fee-for-service, Medicaid, and the Treasury's earned income tax credit. Just three programs account for almost \$81 billion per year in improper payments.

Combined, if we are averaging about \$100 billion a year in improper payments over this 10-year window that we always talk about with the budget, that is \$1 trillion.

Some of these payments are being sent to dead people. Certainly, no one should be opposed to correcting this problem. The GAO points out that interagency communication is not at its finest, but also that there are major errors within the Social Security Administration's death data. Some files show a person's death preceding their recorded birth date. Others show age of death between 115 and 195.

According to the "Guinness World Records" book, in the modern age, the oldest person ever lived to the age of 122. If Social Security's records are correct, they need to inform the Guinness World Records that someone outlived Ms. Jeanne Louise Calment by 73 years.

If we could eliminate these erroneous payments just based on what was paid out in 2014, as I pointed out, that is over \$1 trillion in 10 years. I think we can all agree that that would be a great start toward getting our fiscal house in order.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I am not an advocate of more taxes, but we could do a better job of collecting those that are actually due. As of September 30, 2014,

the Internal Revenue Service's total tax debt inventory was \$380 billion, which is a 23 percent increase since 2009. This is \$380 billion in uncollected taxes.

I think it is safe to assume that we would prefer not to have our hard-earned dollars taken from us, but I also think it is safe to assume that the average person would be disgusted to hear that, while they are paying taxes, others are failing to pay theirs.

One other thing that we could do in the area of tax reform, since I brought that up, is corporate income tax. It is estimated that there are more than \$2 trillion in revenues that are being held offshore that could be repatriated to this country if we lowered our corporate income tax rate, which could, again, provide a substantial flow of revenue to help us address our deficits and pay down our budget.

□ 1545

All this is to say that we need to be more efficient in collecting what we owe and spending what we collect. The budget process is where we can begin to get our fiscal house in order.

Just in these examples, there are over \$1 trillion in savings from eliminating waste, fraud and abuse, and making some sensible reforms. Not only can we balance the budget without increasing spending, we can have a surplus. Let's work together and use these commonsense solutions to restore our fiscal house.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I would again like to thank the gentleman from Alabama for his comments.

Mr. Speaker, you have heard from three freshmen Members today. Next I would like to yield to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WOODALL), a more seasoned member of the Budget Committee.

Mr. WOODALL. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his leadership on this issue.

Say what you want to about freshmen in this institution. I was elected with the vice chairman of the Budget Committee back in 2010, the largest freshman class in history, and it changed this place; changed this place. Largest freshmen class of Republicans and Democrats in history. You need new faces and new ideas. And what you all have done in terms of a Budget Committee at work has just been amazing.

What I have here to contribute is a chart of CBO's projections of GDP growth. And we have some of our Democratic colleagues here on the floor. I just want to say, and I hope folks hold me accountable to it, we can't cut our way into prosperity. We just can't do it. Cutting our way into prosperity isn't going to happen.

You cut budgets because there is bad spending in budgets. You don't cut budgets because cutting is an end in and of itself. You cut things that are bad. You plus up things that are good.

So much of the challenge that we have balancing this budget—we have

done amazing things in terms of reducing wasteful spending in the 5 years that I have been in this body. But the economy keeps declining, the regulation nation that is the new United States of America, draining productivity.

When I arrived, the CBO projected we would be growing at about 3 percent a year as a nation. The next year they revised it down to 2.9; the next year, 2.5; the next year, 2.3; this year, 2.1 percent growth; 2.1 percent growth. That looks like a downward trend. But every 0.1 percent of economic growth that is lost translates into about \$300 billion of economic activity.

If people don't have jobs, they don't pay taxes. If people don't have jobs, they can't contribute to the system. If people can't contribute to the system, revenues go down. If revenues go down, budgets don't balance.

We have to grow our way out of this. We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a bipartisan challenge.

There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see more American jobs in this country, not one. There is not a man or woman in this room who doesn't want to see our entrepreneurs be the most competitive on the planet, not one.

There is not a man or woman in this room who does not believe that America's best days are still going to be tomorrow.

We cannot balance budgets by cutting discretionary spending. In fact, if we zeroed out discretionary spending, zeroed out the courts, zeroed out the parks, zeroed out the military, zeroed out everything, environment, everything people think of as government, and we only paid our Medicare bills, our Medicaid bills, our interest on the national debt, our mandatory spending programs, Social Security programs, that would consume virtually the entire revenue stream of the United States of America.

We have to grow our way out of this, and that is a partnership issue that we can do together.

What Mr. WESTERMAN is doing with his leadership on the budget provides that foundation. If you don't know where you are going, you are not going to get there. We have to have folks who are providing that vision of where we are going. That is what our budget is.

It is our one opportunity as a Congress to come together and talk about our collective vision, not the Republican vision, not the Democratic vision, our vision, America's vision. Unless we are looking at unemployment slides, a downward slope is not our vision. Our vision is more growth, more jobs, more economic activity.

The kind of disciplined budget that Mr. WESTERMAN is talking about today will make all the difference in the world. I thank him for his leadership. I thank him for the time. It is a real honor to serve.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Georgia for his comments.

This is an American problem. It is not a Republican problem or a Democratic problem. It is a bipartisan debt that we all created, and it is going to take bipartisan solutions to fix this debt.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. ROKITA), the vice chair of the Budget Committee.

Mr. ROKITA. Mr. Speaker, let me just say on the Record that I greatly appreciate the leadership of our newer members of the Budget Committee, especially the member from Arkansas. I think the people of Arkansas were right to send him to Congress. Not only does he come ready to identify the spending problems that this country has, but he comes ready with solutions, too. And I think that is, in essence, Mr. Speaker, the definition of leadership. I thank the gentleman.

I also thank the gentleman from Georgia who just spoke. He speaks so eloquently on so many subjects, a member of the Rules Committee. I am also very appreciative of his contribution to the Budget Committee. He, of course, as we all are today, and almost every day, unfortunately, was talking about the debt.

And let me just put it in a pictorial form. This is the new red menace, Mr. Speaker. Look at that trajectory. It goes nearly vertical.

So the question is: How do you turn that big ship, that Titanic, if you will, so, number one, it doesn't sink this entire country and, number two, it gets on a more meaningful, more productive course so that we can continue to be the world's best hope in a 21st century world?

Now, some, especially those on the other side of the aisle, will immediately turn to the fact that there are two ways to, in fact, solve this problem. One is to control spending. The other is to grow revenue.

Let me talk about the latter for just a second. The latter is a false choice because at 10,000 people a day retiring into unreformed social programs, that trajectory will not turn around, it will not plateau.

No matter how much property you confiscate from the American people, Mr. Speaker, no matter how much you take in the form of taxes, with 10,000 people a day retiring in unreformed programs, can you get that to go down.

So let's look at that more closely. This is what the Federal Government confiscates from the American people to run itself. In fiscal year 2015, it was \$3.25 trillion, revenue we took in to run the operations of just the Federal Government.

Mr. Speaker, the American people know we don't have a revenue problem, we have a spending problem.

The question should be what can't you do? What can't you do, Mr. Speaker, with \$3.25 trillion of property confiscated?

More revenue is not the answer. Thankfully, the majority here in the House of Representatives doesn't think

it is the answer either. We know we can do better. We know we have to do better for the American people. We know we have to control the spending.

That is why I am very proud to be part of a committee, the Budget Committee, and part of a new crew that came, starting in 2011, that for every year we have put in a budget, a narrative, something that we don't legally have to do as part of the budget process, but we took the extra step to put a narrative in our budget to give the solutions that are needed to correct this debt problem, reforming Medicare, reforming Medicaid, putting us on a track that will reduce that red menace, that will plateau it, and start pointing it downward over the next generation.

We took the political risk to have that conversation with the American people, and we have done it every year since 2011. Some people called it the third rail of politics. Touch it and you will be politically electrocuted.

Well, we touched it, Mr. Speaker. And we touched the next year, and the next year, and the year after that. And my hope and my pledge is, on this House floor, that we will continue to have that conversation with the American people, backed up with votes that show, really, how to solve this problem.

Mr. Speaker, I will refer us to the spending that I am talking about. This chart was used before by the gentleman from Arkansas. I will refer to it again.

Here is what is on autopilot. Here is what needs to be reformed. And if you look at one piece of that pie there, Medicaid, a solution for that has been in our budget for the last 5 years.

In the remaining time I have, Mr. Speaker, I want to talk about that solution, a State flexibility grant, block grant, if you will. We have had that idea in our budget for the last 5 years.

It is the idea that we in the Federal Government, we are going to get out of the business of Medicaid. We are going to get out of the business of deciding who is poor in terms of health care, what the poor need in terms of health care, or how the poor get it, that health care service.

We are going to give it to the States, to individuals, to locally elected officials, people who know their communities better, in fact, than any Federal bureaucrat does; people who can determine, given a finite amount of money from us, their money back, in fact, what the poor need, who the poor really are, who the disabled really are, what they should get in terms of healthcare services, and how they should get it.

Maybe, like the gentleman from Arkansas alluded to earlier, maybe there ought to be a work requirement for the able-bodied ones of them. Maybe there ought to be other conditions, but let the States decide what that would be, pressured, in a good way, by the fact that there would only be a finite amount of money coming from our budget.

That would allow us to know exactly what we are in for, as a Federal Government, exactly what we are giving out, and not a cent more, and would naturally incentivize the States to innovate, to come up with better ways of service, to serve those who really need health care who can't get it any other way. And those who, in fact, are gaming the system will be naturally forced off.

The States are in the best position to provide that when they are properly incentivized with a finite amount of money that doesn't grow over time.

The Republican budget for the last 5 years, the one that has passed this House of Representatives, has done that very thing. We are on the right track. We need to continue these votes. We need to continue to have a budget. We need to continue to have stand-alone votes on these reforms to take this issue to the American people, especially in a Presidential election year when, frankly, the candidates, I haven't seen them talk enough about what is really on people's minds, and that is how they are going to leave their children and grandchildren with a better life than they have, when we are knowingly saddled with \$19 trillion in debt, a very hard thing to do.

In fact, I think this is the first generation in American history, Mr. Speaker, that is poised to leave the next generation worse off. I refuse to let that happen on this Budget Committee's watch, and that is why we are here today, that is why we are providing the leadership.

I thank the gentleman very much for his leadership.

Mr. WESTERMAN. I thank the gentleman from Indiana for his remarks. I thank him also for his leadership on the Budget Committee. I thank him for his passion to see a better future for our kids and for our grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, having served in a State legislature before coming to Congress, I served in one where we had to balance our budget. And in our State legislature, our single largest expenditure was, by far, Medicaid.

Medicaid exceeded all the money that we spent on public education, higher education, and the Department of Corrections combined. We spent more money on this one Federal State program than we spent on all of education, and that we spent on our prison program.

Mr. Speaker, there is an inverse incentive for States to be good stewards of Medicaid money. In my State, we received \$2.37 of Federal money for every \$1 of State money that we spent.

What my colleague from Indiana is talking about is giving States incentives to manage these programs. If the States had incentives to manage the programs in a better way right now, their hands would be tied by CMS.

The Federal Government won't allow the States to create programs and manage their Medicaid population the way that the States could if they had the opportunity to do that.

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If we give these laboratories of democracy across the country the ability to innovate and the ability to meet the needs of the people that they serve, then they will do that. Government has always been most effective when it is closest to the people. I served on a school board. I know that I had a lot more interaction with my constituents on the school board because I lived in the same community with them than I did as a State legislator or even as I do as a Member of Congress.

We have to be able to give States more flexibility. We have to let them innovate and let them learn from one another across the country to use ideas that work one place and adapt them for another place. That is how we bring fiscal stability back to our Federal budget, by allowing States to manage their State budgets better.

As we look at these mandatory spending programs, as the gentleman from Indiana mentioned, the large part of this mandatory spending—nearly half of it—is all associated with health care. That is Medicare, which is \$634 billion in 2015; Medicaid, \$350 billion in 2015; and then other programs that make up about \$47 billion. Those, combined, are greater than the one single largest expenditure, which is Social Security, which we obviously need to reform, not to punish people but to make it sustainable, to make it last for those who really need the program, and to make it last for all Americans who have invested in that program. The same thing for Medicare.

If we refuse to make changes, if we continue to let the status quo be the current reality, then we will see all of these programs shrink and become insolvent over time, and at the same time we will see our Federal debt continue to bloom, and we will see the amount of interest we pay on the debt continue to grow.

Now is the time for us to take action. Now is the time for us to not only produce a budget that balances, but to enact that budget and to follow that budget.

Again, I would like to thank all the members of the Budget Committee who spoke on the issues today. We will be speaking on them more as we move forward.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 3716, ENSURING REMOVAL OF TERMINATED PROVIDERS FROM MEDICAID AND CHIP ACT

Mr. BURGESS (during the Special Order of Mr. WESTERMAN), from the Committee on Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 114-440) on the resolution (H. Res. 632) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 3716) to amend title XIX of the Social Security Act to require States to provide to the

Secretary of Health and Human Services certain information with respect to provider terminations, and for other purposes, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

HUNGER IN AMERICA

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ABRAHAM). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the Chair recognizes the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for 30 minutes.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight our important Federal nutrition programs, and I rise today to remind my colleagues that we have a hunger problem in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, there is not a single congressional district in this country that is hunger free. Every community—whether urban, suburban, or rural—faces hunger. One in seven Americans experience hunger, including 16 million children. We are the richest, most powerful country in the history of the world. It is shameful that even one child goes to bed hungry.

In every community across the country, there are dedicated, passionate local antihunger organizations that do incredible work to provide food assistance and support those struggling with hunger, from food banks to food pantries, to faith-based organizations, to community centers, to hospitals, and on and on and on. Charities do important, wonderful work, but they cannot do it alone. The demand is simply too high. Charities need a strong partner in the Federal Government if we are ever going to end hunger.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP, which used to be known as food stamps, is our Nation's premier antihunger program. It is effective and it is efficient, with an error rate of less than 4 percent, which includes both overpayments and underpayments.

By the way, underpayments are when a recipient receives less than they are eligible for, and that happens often.

Find me a Pentagon spending program with such a low error rate. The fact of the matter is SNAP is one of the most successful—if not the most successful—Federal programs that we have.

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children, or WIC, provides nutritious foods, counseling on healthy eating, and breastfeeding support to more than 8 million low-income women and children at nutritional risk. WIC gives infants and young children the healthy, nutritious start that they need for critical early development and lifelong learning. It is an incredibly vital program.

The National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs and the Summer Food Service Program provide nutritious foods for millions of children and

teens in educational and community settings. These important programs ensure that our young people are ready to learn and that they can succeed.

The Meals on Wheels program provides home-delivered meals to millions of homebound seniors. Not only does Meals on Wheels improve senior nutrition, it also enables seniors to live independently longer while receiving daily check-in visits from volunteers.

These are just a few of the vital Federal antihunger programs that are the backbone of our fight to end hunger once and for all in this country. But, Mr. Speaker, one of the reasons why I am coming to this floor today is I am deeply worried that they are coming under attack by the Republican majority in this House.

Unfortunately, it is fashionable right now to demonize Americans living in poverty and to belittle their struggles. We hear that all too often on this House floor. We hear that all too often in this Presidential campaign that is going on. The fact of the matter is it is hard work to be poor in America. It is not easy. Yet millions of families are struggling, trying to raise their kids and living on a paycheck that doesn't provide enough to put food on the table.

Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, I spent a night at a homeless shelter in Worcester, Massachusetts, called the Interfaith Hospitality Network. It is a family homeless shelter. As you know, there are not enough shelters that accommodate entire families. Usually families get split up. But what I wasn't prepared for when I spent the night at this shelter was that every one of these families had at least one adult that was working. They were working in a job. They all had unique situations that put them in a very difficult situation. But the fact of the matter is they were working. They were earning just enough that a lot of their benefits were reduced, but they were not earning enough to be able to put a down payment on an apartment and afford rent.

These are parents that love their kids every bit as much as I love my kids and my colleagues love their kids. They want to be good parents, but they are struggling. They are looking for a hand up, not a handout. They are looking for a little bit of assistance so they can get back on their feet.

The bottom line is that their plight is not unique. I will tell my colleagues that their plight does not fall into a neat stereotype. Too often when people here in this Chamber talk about the homeless or the hungry, they talk about people who are addicted to drugs, or they talk about people who don't work or who don't want to work. That is not the reality. That is not the face of poverty in this country. It is much more complicated than that. And yet, to justify deep cuts in programs to actually help people get back on their feet, we hear the false narrative repeated over and over and over again, the demonization of these people who are struggling in poverty.